TIMEX sinclair
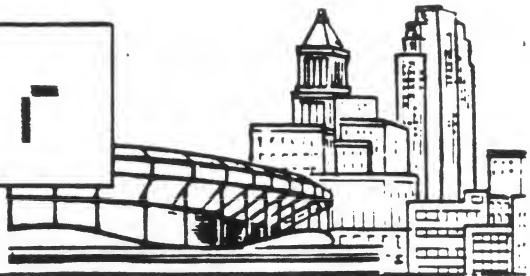
USERS GROUP OF CINCINNATI

NEXT MEETING:

APRIL 15, 1984 (Are your taxes done?)

MAY 20, 1984

All meetings are held at 2:00 P.M. in Room 506, Crosley Tower University of Cincinnati.

Secretary's Report

FEBRUARY, 1984

Last month's meeting was very exciting indeed. We learned of Timex's decision to abandon the home computer market entirely. They are promising to honor the warranty and service agreements, however. Thank goodness for small favors. We, as a group, have resolved to continue to support our computers with whatever resources we have.

To that end, the executive committee will draft letters to Timex, Sinclair Research, and the Timex/Sinclair centered publications, and the other User groups around the country.

The regular business of the group included the adoption of our constitution, the election of Rick Johnson as President, Kurt Albrecht as Treasurer, and Gary Szekeres as Secretary. We also had a guest speaker, Mr. Chip Root, from Gerner's T.V. and Appliance store in Newport, Ky. He was present at our request to demonstrate to our group, the Commodore 64 computer.

Jack Robertson brought his Aerco Disk Drive for the T/S 1000, 1500, and ZX81. It worked flawlessly and astonishingly quickly, especially so if you are used to cassette-tape storage. The unit is available through third party suppliers for around $500.

There was a suggestion from the membership taht we make an effort to support the union of Timex/Sinclair Users' groups across the country. That proposal was approved by the group and will be followed up by Rick Johnson. He will also be in contact with Timex to try and get whatever information he can concerning the technical aspects of the T/S 2068.

MARCH, 1984

The meeting started at 2:00 P.M. with 16 members present. Jack Roberts has access to 400 software titles for the T/S 1000. These are priced at $4.95 or $40 a dozen($3.33 each). Jack also announced tha availability of a centronics parrallel interface for the T/S 1000, and soon to be available for the T/S 2068. This interface is made by Aerco for use with the Pro-writer printer. The price for the T/S 2068 version will be $64.95 including software. It is available from Knighted Computers, 707 Highland St., Fulton, N.Y. 13069

Swallens will have available the following specials:
  a) T/S 2068 $99.95
  b) T/S 2068, Timex recorder, and three cassette software titles $147.00
  c) T/S 2068, Timex recorder, 2040 printer, 2050 modem, three cassette software titles, and one cartridge software title $247.00

A new newsletter called "Survivor" by Games to Live By, Inc. will mainly be advertising supported.

President's Report

This month it is necessary to announce Timex's decision to withdraw from the home computer market. For those of you who have not heard, sorry to be the one to break the news.

Presently, there are many rumors on what happened and what the future holds for Timex users. Rather than try to evaluate what happened or speculate on the future, I would like to dwell on things we can do as a group (and an alliance of groups) to keep up the level of support we need.

I think the term orphan computer is appropriate to this situation. Just as in real life an infant orphan needs more attention than an older orphan, therefore I propose that we devote the majority of our efforts to the infant T/S 2068 and some to the more mature T/s 1000. To this end we will be pursuing the following strategies with the support of the group as expressed in the Feb 26th meeting:
   Letters to Timex Computer Corp. We will request in writing any, and all information they can make available including hardware wiring diagrams, software info, etc. We will probably have to sign a nondisclosure agreement in order to get some of what we want.
   Letters to other users groups We presently have sent our Feb. 84 newsletter to 93 groups and have only gotten 6 back as undeliverable. We will let these groups know of our willingness to support a nationwide unified effort to obtain continued support from third party vendors, to trade newsletters, to exchange public domain software, and to solve common hardware and/or software problems. We are making our user group mailing list available to other groups as a T/S 2068 VU-file data base.
   Letters to third party hardware/software developers and vendors We will be sending a letter to all third party vendors we feel are in a position to help support the T/S users. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the T/S 2068 support because of its infancy status, however T/S 1000 support will be encouraged. We have heard of several vendors with T/S 2068 products in various states of completion. If we can get letters encouraging further developments it may prevent them from dropping their support.
   Letters to Sinclair We will be sending a letter to Uncle Clive requesting they not forget us. At very least we hope they will find a replacement for Timex to license the Spectrum technology.

Until now there has been little reason for T/S groups around the country to ban together. That has all changed now. Collectively we can all keep the orphans alive and well.

CONTENTS:

Taming The Bug In Vu-Calc T/S 2068

If you have tried to use Vu-Calc for the T/S 2068, then most likely you've met the bug. At the beginning, he stays pretty much hidden. It is only after you get used to the program and start doing something useful that he deals his apparently fatal bite.

A sample session with Vu-Calc might go something like this:

Vu-Calc is loaded into the T/S 2068 - no problem. The title and then The Screen$ appear and soon the Vu-Calc spreadsheet itself is on the screen... ready to use. Let's start with something simple, like a loan payoff schedule (maybe not so simple). Anyway, you get the spreadsheet set up the way you want it. Now, you save the data to tape using the option from within Vu-Calc - #1 [ENTER] . With that spreadsheet safely saved, we move on to create another masterpiece. To clear the work sheet we give the command to quite (#q 'return) and we choose the option 2: CLEAR WORKSHEET.

Now, with a clear worksheet, you can start setting up another valuable spreadsheet. Wrong!! Any formula or calculations entered to the program will kick you out and GO TO 9000 won't work. The bug has bitten!

The option "2 : CLEAR WORKSHEET" is the culprit. This was supposed to allow the set up of a new spreadsheet or the reloading of a previously set up Vu-Calc, but it failed. There is, however, an easy, almost trivial, solution.

The first statement in line 3200 should be
    3200 CLEAR 29327:   and then the remainder of Psions BASIC statement (DIM b$(100): DIM c$(20): etc.).

Without the Clear 29327 statement, The DIM statements cause other variables to be overwritten and lost - namely: e2, e3, bfre, dcontx and others. Not only are their values lost, but they cannot be reassigned!

You now have the solution, now here's how to make the change. From the Vu-Calc program, choose " #q " and then option 1 : EXIT PROGRAM . You should get the error report of " 9 STOP statement, 3100:2 " . Press [CAPS SHIFT] 6 , and then [CAPS SHIFT]] to edit the BASIC program line 3200. Press " X " (CLEAR) and type the number 29327 followed by the colon (:) and press ENTER . That is the change.

To get started back into Vu-Calc, enter the command: GO TO 3200 [ENTER]. You now have the cleared Vu-Calc spreadsheet ready for use.

With the change made as above, I have not had any problems with the workings of Vu-Calc. There are other shortcomings, such as being limited to numbers of seven digits or less, but at least it works.

Hope this helps a little.

BY: Gary Szekeres

Response from Timex on T/S 2068

Dave Tashjian received a telephone call from Timex. Timex sent two hand selected T/S 2068 to Swallen's for his appraisal. Dave reported that neither machine was any better than the one he had. In a subsequent conversation, a Timex engineer admitted that the problem was in the custom chip, and that only a redesign would cure the problem. The problem apparently stems from the different scan rates between U.K. and U.S. T.V. sets.

This space reserved for your article. This is your chance to see your name in print.

Send all articles to:

    Bill Bernard
    6316 Firestone Dr.
    Fairfield, OH 45014

FROM NEWSLETTERS
AROUND THE WORLD

FROM THE CAPITOL AREA TIMEX/SINCLAIR USERS GROUP

The following questions were fielded by Mr. Victor Schiff, of Timex. The answers that follow are not to be considered Mr. Schiff's words - I'm just writing this as I remember the responses.

Q. Can the T/S 1016 16K RAM be attached to the T/S 1500?
A. Yes - just plug it in(and POKE 16389,198; then NEW).

Q. What are the tone frequencies for 1's and 0's on the tape SAVE?
A. Data format on tape is a leader of 806.5-Hz, one cycle of 2040-Hz, and data. Data is MS bit first; 0's are 1 cycle of 2040-Hz and 1's are 1 cycle of 1020-Hz. Parity byte concludes sequence.

Q. What about the sizzle in some 2068's and 1500's?
A. That's a non-destructive fault in a small isolation transformer, located near the TV modulator box. The two halves of the magnetic core are not cemented together firmly, and generate that sizzle. This can be fixed by opening the case(and voiding the warranty), finding the offending transformer, and adding a couple of drops of super glue to the joint between the cores.

FROM THE TRIANGLE TIMEX SINCLAIR USERS' GROUP

Here's a way of going through the display file and darkening up each dot, then printing out everything with COPY for a nice dark, hard copy image. This phenomenal routine was developed for the T/S 2068 by Dick Scoville.

Here is the routine in hex addresses and Z80 instruction mnemonics:

```
F490    LD    HL,0058    5800
F493    DEC   HL
F494    LD    A,H
F495    CP    40         64
F497    RET   C
F498    LD    A,(HL)
F499    RRA
F49A    OR    (HL)
F49B    LD    (HL),A
F49C    JR    F5         F493
```

And here it is in Hex code (you should start it at address 62608): 21,00,58,2B,7C,FE,40,D8,7E,1F,B6,77,18,F5

And here is the BASIC/decimal POKE listing:

```
10 CLEAR 62607
15 LET a=62608
20 READ n
25 IF n=-1 THEN GO TO 50
30 POKE a,n
35 LET a=a+1
40 GO TO 20
50 STOP
60 DATA 33,0,88,43,124,254,64,
216,126,31,182,119,24,245,-1
```

Type it in, RUN it, then LIST and RANDOMIZE USR 62608. Behold a darker image. Now COPY it on the printer and BEHOLD PURE MAGIC!!

```
10 CLEAR 62607
15 LET a=62608
20 READ n
25 IF n=-1 THEN GO TO 50
30 POKE a,n
35 LET a=a+1
40 GO TO 20
50 STOP
60 DATA 33,0,88,43,124,254,64,
216,126,31,182,119,24,245,-1
```

MISSING THE MARCH ISSUE?

You may have noticed that this is a combined March/April issue. Due to some lost mail and personal reasons, the March issue was not ready in time. Due to the early April meeting, a combined issue was decided upon.

TIMEX/SINCLAIR USERS GROUP
     OF CINCINNATI
11 FUNSTON LN.
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45218

CINCINNATI, OH
APR 10
FM
1984

USA
20c